

# **Employee Assistance Program & Free Life Assistance Counseling**

January 28, 2008

***Q. What is an employee assistance program (EAP)?***

- A. Since there is a link between personal health and productivity, Employee Assistance Plans (EAP) were established to provide employees and their dependents access to confidential and professional assistance in solving problems that reduce or obstruct performance at work. These problems may consist of chemical dependency, stress, family problems, financial burdens, loss of loved ones, or mental health issues. This is not intended to be a long-term solution for the employees. Should subsequent treatment be required, the contractor will transition the patient from this program to an employee-paid program or to other providers.

Effective October 18, 2006, the State of Utah awarded contracts to 5 EAP providers that may be used statewide, see below for more information.-

***Q. Is it true that PEHP offers free Life Assistance Counseling?***

- A. Yes, PEHP is offering free life assistance counseling, through Blomquist Hale, to all state employees who are enrolled in the state medical benefits package. This counseling shall be used for short-term problems and may be referred out to employee-paid counselors if ongoing treatment is needed.

***Q. How do I access the free Life Assistance Counseling?***

- A. Information can be found on Blomquist Hale's website at [www.blomquisthale.com](http://www.blomquisthale.com). To obtain counseling services, please call the applicable phone number listed below:

Salt Lake: 262-9619  
Ogden: 392-6833  
Orem/Provo: 225-9222  
Logan: 752-3241  
Brigham City: 723-1610  
All other areas: 1-800-926-9619

***Q. What is the difference between Life Assistance Counseling and an EAP?***

- A. Both benefits cover short term counseling, but exist for the following reasons.

Life Assistance Counseling is for benefited employees who have personal and family issues that need temporary outside assistance. PEHP is paying for this benefit in hopes of reducing more serious medical problems later on.

An EAP may be for all employees (benefited and non-benefited) who have personal, family, or work related issues that need outside assistance. Qualifying issues include mandatory referrals for job related problems, self referrals for employees and/or

dependents, drug assessment, critical incident debriefings, post-traumatic counseling, crisis management and grief counseling. Each agency pays for this benefit in hopes of creating a more productive and healthy work environment. Employees should be aware of agency policies and procedures and comply with those requirements.

***Q. Who are the statewide EAP providers and how do I contact them?***

- A. Effective October 18, 2006, the State of Utah awarded contracts to 5 Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Providers. These providers include the following:

CONTRACTOR	CONTRACT #	Other Information
Associated Behavioral Consultants	MA2021	Includes Counseling & Fitness for Duty Evaluations
Blomquist Hale Consulting	MA2022	Includes Counseling
Comprehensive Psychological Svcs.	MA2023	Includes Counseling
Interface Psychological Services	MA2024	Includes Counseling
Insights and Positive Alternatives (IPAC)	MA2025	Services provided in Sevier, Beaver, Sanpete, Millard, Wayne and Piute.

Contracts can be accessed at [www.purchasing.utah.gov](http://www.purchasing.utah.gov) . These contracts are not intended to replace services provided through the free Life Assistance Counseling offered by PEHP, but agencies may choose to offer these services to employees as an alternative. Each agency must decide what contractors and services to offer. Once decided, agencies should prepare a memo of understanding with each provider they plan to use. The memo should include criteria for using the EAP, procedures for employees to follow, and billing information. Finally, agencies should disseminate information to all employees notifying them of the EAP services and how to utilize them.

Please contact your agency HR Representatives for further information or refer to your agency policies and procedures.

***Q. Does the EAP provider share information with my employer?***

- A. The agency receives a usage report for billing purposes that shows how many employees are accessing the benefits and how many visits they have had. The names of the individuals remain anonymous. There are a few cases in which an agency may require an employee to obtain counseling services for work related problems or “fitness-for-duty” purposes. In those cases, the agency may obtain information from the EAP with the employee’s consent.

***Q. Are these services available to my family members?***

- A. Yes. Anyone receiving insurance through the state medical benefits package can obtain the free Life Assistance Counseling Services. EAP services may be available to dependents, if the employing agency allows for that.

**Q.**     ***How much does it cost?***

A.     It depends on each agency and how they plan to utilize the EAP. While agencies are free to use all 5 EAP providers, they may choose to use only one or two. Each EAP provider offers different services, prices, and number of visits. Those visits are not charged to you, but they are charged to your agency. Therefore, you must follow agency policies and procedures to ensure that you are visiting allowed EAP providers. Once you exceed the number of visits allowed for the applicable provider, or if the EAP provider refers you to a provider outside his/her office, you may be billed for the additional visits. If the provider you choose to use outside of the EAP program is a provider on your health insurance plan, you may make a claim with your plan for payment of the services. The amount paid by your health insurance carrier is in accordance with the normal mental health benefits provided to employees of the State of Utah.